

From: mikea
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/17/01 12:49pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern,

I have owned and operated a small computer technical support business in a small community in the California Sierra foothills for the past three years. Before that I worked for ten years at a mid-sized corporation as a computer system administrator, and I have been employed in the computer business since 1985. All of my clients use versions of Windows, including Windows9x/ME/2000/XP, and I have been at Ground Zero during the two lawsuits of note involving the Justice Department and the Microsoft Corporation.

While the finding of the Justice Department that Microsoft had violated U.S. anti-trust law was heartening--since my experience has been conclusive that this is exactly what they did--the recent settlement is totally unacceptable. This is not a remedy, it is an appeasement of such depth and breadth that I have to wonder what sort of corruption is at its root. It fundamentally does not address the main problem with the Microsoft monopoly, which in the finding is described as "the application barrier to entry." In other words, Microsoft is still free to load its operating systems with all sorts of marketing garbage that freeze out competitor's products that are often superior, in that they are free of the bugs that often plague Microsoft initial offerings that have been designed to capture a particular market.

A perfect example of this is what happened with Internet Explorer. The first versions were an embarrassment to good programming, but because the browser was given away and automatically loaded onto the desktop with the delivery of Window98, Netscape never had a chance. Rockefeller would have been proud. The problem with this is that, with all monopolies, my clients were financially harmed by this chicanery. They did not have a choice in the browser market, and as Internet Explorer was forced down their throats in order for them to do business, they suffered financial losses due to the consequent loss in productivity.

Now we are headed down this same dismal road once again. With the release of WindowsXP, you had a unique opportunity to address the application barrier to entry by preventing Microsoft from taking advantage of its monopoly in the operating system market to capture the digital media, development, and internet application markets, just as it did with the browser market. But you failed to protect consumers and businesses alike by reaching a settlement with Microsoft that does nothing to address its proposed monopoly in these emerging markets.

I do not know how you sleep at night after having reached this tainted agreement; though I have a feeling that a corrupt Republican administration with pillows stuffed with soft money, you most likely sleep very, very soundly. Just so you know, out here in the hinterlands we are not sleeping so well. Our dreams are, instead, nightmares, as we twist and spin trying to figure out how we are ever going to root out the criminal corruption that creates the stench so prevalent in Washington D.C. at this time in history. I will remind you that small businesses are the ones who will be hurt by your decision, and they are by far the largest percentage of employers in this country.

I beg of you, please reconsider your decision. Our economic future, the health of our families and our communities, absolutely depends on a Justice Department that is free of criminal behavior.

Most Respectfully Yours,

Michael P. Anderson
mikea@clientworks.com
10288 Natasha Ct.
Nevada City, CA 95959

CC: mikea@clientworks.com@inetgw